

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 30. (Cancelled)

31. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 41 wherein the DNA probe contains at least 360 contiguous nucleotides corresponding to the genomic RNA of the HIV-3 retrovirus.

32. – 36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 31 wherein the DNA probe comprises SEQ ID NO:1 or the complement thereof.

38. (Withdrawn) The process of claim 31 wherein the DNA probe comprises SEQ ID NO:2 or the complement thereof.

39. (Withdrawn) The process of claim 31 wherein the DNA probe corresponds to the nucleotide sequence coding for proteins p12, p16 or p25 of the HIV-3 retrovirus or the complement thereof.

40. (Withdrawn) The process of claim 31 wherein the DNA probe corresponds to the nucleotide sequence coding for glycoproteins gp41 or gp120 of the HIV-3 retrovirus or the complement thereof.

41. (Currently Amended) A process for the detection of HIV-3 retrovirus or of its RNA in a biological liquid or tissue containing nucleic acid, characterized by:

- a) contacting nucleic acids contained in said biological liquid or tissue with a DNA probe;
- b) hybridizing the nucleic acid from the biological liquid or tissue with the DNA probe under stringent hybridization conditions to form a nucleic acid:DNA probe hybrid;
- c) washing the hybrid under stringent conditions; and
- d) detecting the presence of the nucleic acid:DNA probe hybrid;

wherein the DNA probe specifically hybridizes under stringent conditions with detects the genomic RNA of the HIV-3 retrovirus deposited at the European Collection of Animal Cell Cultures (ECACC) under No. V88060301 when hybridized under stringent conditions; wherein the stringent conditions comprise hybridization in 3X SSC, 0.5% milk powder, 1% SDS, 10% dextran sulfate, and 50% formamide

(volume/volume) at 42 °C for 18 hours followed by two 30 minute washes in 0.1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS at 65 °C.

42. (New) A process for the detection of HIV-3 retrovirus or of its RNA in a biological liquid or tissue containing nucleic acid, comprising:

- a) contacting nucleic acids contained in said biological liquid or tissue with a DNA probe;
- b) hybridizing the nucleic acid from the biological liquid or tissue with the DNA probe under stringent hybridization conditions to form a nucleic acid:DNA probe hybrid;
- c) washing the hybrid under stringent conditions; and
- d) detecting the presence of the nucleic acid:DNA probe hybrid;

wherein the DNA probe comprises a sequence that is identical to all or a portion of a cDNA corresponding to the entire genomic RNA of the HIV-3 retrovirus deposited at the European Collection of Animal Cell Cultures (ECACC) under No. V88060301;

wherein stringent conditions comprise conditions at least as stringent as hybridization in 3X SSC, 0.5% milk powder, 1% SDS, 10% dextran sulfate, and 50% formamide (volume/volume) at 42 °C for 18 hours followed by two 30 minute washes in 0.1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS at 65 °C.

43. (New) The process of claim 42 wherein the DNA probe contains at least 360 contiguous nucleotides corresponding to the genomic RNA of the HIV-3 retrovirus.

44. (New) The process of claim 43 wherein the DNA probe comprises SEQ ID NO:1 or the complement thereof.